(4) Registration.

39. The necessity for reducing the rates of fees for the registration of documents.

Mr. C. Padmanabha Pillai (Member, Quilon taluk) said that registration fees had been recently enhanced. The existing rates were unduly high and sat heavily on the people. He then compared in detail the schedule of fees with the rates in British India and showed that the fees prescribed in Travancore were higher. He argued that the necessity had not been proved to raise the fees higher than in British India. The Member requested that the fees should be reduced.

Mr. Philipose Alexander (Member, Kunnathur taluk) said that, in regard to the encumbrance (*Villanga*) certificates, it was hard that the applicants should be asked to search and examine the registration records. An official in each office should be empowered to make the search. The search fees were one rupee for the first year and 4 as. for every additional year up to a maximum of Rs. 5. The rates that obtained prior to Regulation II of 1087 were moderate, *viz.*, half a rupee for the first year and a maximum of Rs. $2\frac{1}{2}$. The old rates should be revived. If that was not possible, those rates should alone be charged at least in the cases of applicants who furnished specific particulars of the number and date of the documents to be searched.

(2) In regard to copies of documents obtained from registration offices, the first page was written on an eight anna stamp paper, and for every subsequent page, a fee of 2 as. was charged, which was more than the fee levied in the Civil Courts, *viz.*, $2\frac{1}{2}$ chs. per page. The fee should be reduced to the old rate of one anna a page or at least to $2\frac{1}{2}$ chs. per page.

(3) Owing to the restriction that documents presented for registration should be returned the same day, many documents were refused, and the parties had to go to the office three and four days to present a document. To obviate the inconvenience, the Member suggested that a rule should be passed permitting the return of documents within fifteen days after presentation or that the time for presentation should be extended up to 4 P. M. each day.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

III.—PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

Agriculture.

40. The urgent necessity for the constitution of Co-operative Credit Societies in Travancore.

Mr. Easwaran Narayanan Oonnithan (Member, Karthigappalli taluk) said that the Co-operative Societies Bill, which was about to become law, was an honest attempt to promote thrift and self-respect among the industrial population of the State. After examining at some length the present condition of the agriculturists in the State, he observed that the tendency of the generality of people was to seek Government appointments and that the cultivation of land was abandoned to indigent and illiterate peasants, who were the despair of the Agricultural Department. Even they, being extremely poor, were at the mercy of the usurious money-lenders. There was therefore an urgent need for the constitution of Co-operative Credit Societies in important agricultural centres in the State. Such societies, by making loans to its members at reasonable rates of interest, would tend to eliminate the usurer from the agricultural life of the country. They would extinguish the necessity of resorting to the money-lender. They would also aid the improvement of agriculture in a great measure. So far as the present Regulation aimed at the attainment of those objects, it would be warmly welcomed by all persons interested in the agricultural prosperity of the State.

But it should not be forgotten that the people were not always ready to avail themselves of the privileges conferred on them by an enactment like the Co-operative

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